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placed on the outside of garden or hamlet-fences, to discourage hyenas, to keep livestock inside -- a natural barbed wire.

Eucalyptus tree ("bahĕr zaf") has become thoroughly rooted in Ethiopia. It is used in construction, especially of the more urban dwellings, as urban fuel, and its blue smoke and aroma is an early morning and evening feature of every town and market-town, where it is a major trade item. During the rainy season it grows so fast that a mature tree can be "harvested" 5 years after the nursling stage. Since it sells for $3-5 Ethiopian, (US $1-2) it is the most planted tree in Ethiopia today. The peasant also likes to use the odoriferous branches and leaves to cover the "dass" the festivity-shelter on marriages, etc., and the leafy branch as chera, flyswitch. Entire hillsides may be seen planted with this tree.

Female woods are also used for other indispensable products:

[386] Ink - is made from the fruit of the "tämbälal" (Jasminum floribundum) tree, and its timer is used

[534] for the stock of the single-string violin, the masenqo. (But imported blue ink called "nil" is preferred by däbtära scribes.)

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283 Fibre - for basketry, roof-hoops, etc. is obtained from the "wärqë" (musa ensete) (also called "enset") at lower altitudes, used especially for cords. Rope "gämäd" is made from the bark cut

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[283] from a living, corky, African Baobab (Adansonia digitata), called "demma". Rope is also made from a tropical creeper of lower altitudes, called "arāg", or of reed fibers. Thatching grass of excellent quality is obtained from a strong, tall reed called "fāla" which resembles papyrus and grows on the shore of lakes. The "gecha" reed grows on the shore of rivers and is used to make the famous sun-umbrellas owned by every rural housewife, though once the privilege of kings and nobles.

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[372] Fuel - Charcoal for firing pottery and smithing is made from the big "amfar" tree. Now also from the eucalyptus tree, but in rural areas the umbrella tree; "grar" is preferred because it does not have to be paid for.

[384] Dyestuff - the bark of the "wāyba" tree was used to make the yellow dye for the togas of monks, now only in the more remote, change-resisting monasteries (most others wear white).

[222] Many other basic necessities for life and comfort are also obtained by collecting, by remembering where in the bush one has encountered the right kind or shape of plant, rather than planting and caring for it in gardens.

[388] Soap - is obtained in rural areas from the crushed fruit of the "endod" bush (Hircunia Abyssinica).

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281 Tannin for tanning and curing hides - is obtained from the bark of the "beshesha" bush; from the

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

462 252 [554] pater familias, certainly not a feudal "great man" or official will buy from her, and a lazy housewife, even an urban one, would be sharply criticized, even divorced, if she bought the product of the "gagari". For it is believed that her baking is carelessly done, that sand and dirt have not been picked out carefully before and during grinding, and the product is "fit only for Shanqalla" ex-slaves. One thin, round, two-foot pancake of "enjära" costs 5 Ethiopian cents (US$0.02); dabbo bread of course costs considerably more but customers are less frequent than for the daily "enjära" bread.

283 462 Spinning is the task of the housewife and of all women attached to a household, be it a hamlet kin group, or an all-female zar society (see chapter on spiritual healing). On her wedding day, the bride brings with her a small, ornamented reed basket, called "muday", in which she carries her own personal little distaff, some cotton thread on a reed bobbin that she has made, together with personal [885] ornaments and tattooing dyes. This symbolizes that she is ready for adult womanhood and marriage, though she may be only 13 or 14 years old.

Carding of the raw cotton is also done by women. They beat it, pick out the husks, then place the cotton balls on the string of a bow called "dägan", tense the string with a stick, then agitate the string with the neck cut off a gourd (called "qel angät"). This loosens the cotton so that it can be cleaned and completely dehusked.

Every afternoon the housewife takes up her spinning, unless some special task takes her time. The distaff "emmärt" consists of a round, solid reed or thin round

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462 wood about 10 inches long, crowned near the tap end by a round, wooden disk about 1-1/2 inches in diameter. The reed penetrates it through a hole in the center of the disk, and the top of the reed has a small wire hook (called "qwanṭa") attached. The spinner uses this hook to rip out a bit of raw cotton, rapidly twirls the reed in vertical position, pulling thread after thread ("der") from the ball of cotton, and wrapping the thread on the reed below the disk. During this process, the balls of cotton are held in her left palm, the twirling of the distaff is done by her right hand, while the thumb and index finger of the left hand undo knots in the thread and generally straighten it out. The motor habit of this makes it possible to work very rapidly, the thread accumulating on the reed below the disk.

It is now taken off and rolled and connected in two possible ways. Some are rolled directly onto small reed bobbins 3-1/2 inches long, hollow, with outside diameter of 3/8 inches, called "qälam" ("qäsäm" in Shoa province). These are later placed in the shuttle of the weaver for the weft. Cotton for the warp requires firmer consistency and more preparation. After spinning, it is either rerolled onto the sorter end of a partitioned distaff-shaped but much firmer wooden stick that may be as much as 2 feet long and 1/4 inch thick, called "mädawäriya". This rolling is done horizontally, on the upper thigh, in the privacy of the hut, or by an ex-slave Shanqalla servant woman in similar fashion. The other method which may follow this or serve as alternative, is the rolling of the

283 thread onto a warping reel in rough basket shape and size,
462 called "mäzäwär". It is a kneehigh frame of branches set on the ground, with a somewhat narrower waist. Several s skeins of cotton thread are thus connected and rolled into long, firm strands to serve as warp.

Sometimes it takes several months for a housewife to prepare enough cotton thread for the warp and woof of a single toga ("shamma"). But a diligent woman, if she has little else to do, can prepare enough for half a dozen
286 or more togas a year. The cotton thread is now given to the male weaver "shamani" who is to weave the toga. He may set up his loom in the back yard of the customer, or work near his own hut.

462 Skilled occupations for single women, e.g. "women between marriages" who often go to urban centers, are few. The brewer of mead and owner of the "tej bēt", described under entertainment, usually employs several women as waitress-prostitutes.

462 There is another occupation, the woman beautician.
305 She may be specialized as a tatooer of women, "täqwari",
304 usually a Coptic Amhara woman, who is kept busy especially
796 before great church holy days such as the Feast of the True Cross ("Mäsqäl"), Christmas ("Gänna") and Epiphany ("Temqät"). Hercustomers are more often divorcees "between marriages "(who can afford it because of earnings as restaurateur-prostitutes or beer and mead brewers), than young girls or married women, who have no cash. As the name indicates ("tęqurat" means blackening), one of her jobs is to darken the gums between the teeth, to heighten

281 Fats, usually of plant origin, either wild or domestic, are then used to lubricate and soften the skin. This is hard manual work, lasting sometimes several days. Most commonly preferred is the castor oil bean, called "qaçhma" or "gulqwas". The skin may now be kneaded or stamped by feet, to work the fats in and render the skin soft for the cutting and fashioning of objects, which now follows.

282 411 The shield was formerly one of the major products of the Faqi, but now is made rarely and only for ornamental use. The rhinoceros or buffalo skin is cut circular, placed over a wooden stake in the ground, the rim pegged down, to prepare the cupola shape. The skin is then depilated, dried, smeared with oils to expand again. It is beaten to increase its resistance. Incised decorations and the pulling through of the leather handle, are done before the shield is entirely hard and dry. Metal decor is added later, by the smith, after the Faqi has delivered his product.

282 [854] [415] More common products, still made today, are: half-sack, "ənqälba", for carrying the baby on the mother's back, with straps and a bottom tied to the mother's shoulders, chest and waist; full sacks, "aqomada", for transporting grain to market, tied with strips (these are also used for various storage in the better Amhara huts);

[283] straps cut of poor skins in all kinds and sizes, "qeralla", some for tying loads onto donkeys, some to serve as more springy diagonal straps of the better "alga" bed; a fine, tanned cowskin used as blanket; "jändi", cover

3: Buxton Y-5 (1946-1948) 1949 MP5 Amhara MP5

241 variety) and linseed is grown in most parts of it. Where more shelter exists lentils and chick-pea are also planted, and another low-growing leguminous
[824] crop called *gwayo*, which is used only as a cattle fodder as it is believed to cause softening of the bones in man! The barley is planted early and the other crops late in the main rainy season (June–September). Barley is sometimes also planted in the early rains, which are very uncertain here but usually begin in February or March. In this area however the early crop rarely gives a good return and sometimes fails completely. The plateau land, after being cultivated for a few years (often until it shows obvious signs of exhaustion), is fallowed for a period which varies widely according to the type of soil, but may be as long as five or seven years.

Down in the gorges, where the climate is appreciably milder, and where a primitive sort of irrigation can be practised on the level shelves, both chick-pea and lentils flourish. Some *teff* (a grass-like cereal greatly favoured for making the local bread) can be grown, as well as wheat and barley. Shelf cultivation seems as a rule to be continuous, perhaps because of the fresh sediment spread annually over the fields by rain and irrigation. In the lower parts of the gorges some maize and millet (*Sorghum*) can be found, but almost the whole of the area included on the map is too high for these crops. Other gorge products, unknown on the plateau, are tomatoes, chillies, coffee and *gesho*—a shrub whose leaves are used for fermenting the local beer (*talla*) and honey-wine (*tej*). Bananas, for no obvious reason, are not grown, but are brought to Debra Berhan market from the low country beyond the eastern escarpment.

The agricultural methods of the Ethiopians are far more advanced than those of any surrounding territory and do not belong to Africa. They can be paralleled among the west-Asian peasantry, and a close comparison with the methods of the Yemen mountain people might be especially fruitful. It was from this latter region that the Ethiopians' ancestors emigrated, before the
[177] Christian era, and it is extremely probable that they brought with them both implements and a knowledge of techniques. Hence perhaps the use of the plough, universal among highland Ethiopians, and their skill in irrigation and terracing.

[462] Farming in Ethiopia is primarily the man's and not the woman's work,
[283] the standard female occupation, apart from household cares, being spinning.
[231] (Cotton is widely grown in the lowlands.) The farmers spend most of their lives at the plough, a one-handled variety drawn by a yoke of oxen. In their right hand they carry a whip with a short handle and long, heavy thong which they continually whirl and crack above the heads of the oxen, to whom, at the same time, they address an endless succession of strange howls and shouts, curses and imprecations. New or long-fallowed grassland is broken in with the plough in the dry season. This complicated process (known as *gai*) involves first scratching the ground in several directions to dislodge the turf, next gathering the sods into numerous heaps, then setting fire to these so that grass and weeds are gradually burnt out, and finally spreading out the soil again. But the great time for ploughing comes after the main rains have reduced the countryside to a sea of soft, dark mud. At this season the fields are peppered with ploughmen. Each successive sowing must be prepared